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## ENERGY USE IN HOUSING

# Meter-Reading Test Delayed

By RANDALL SHOEMAKER

Times Staff Writer

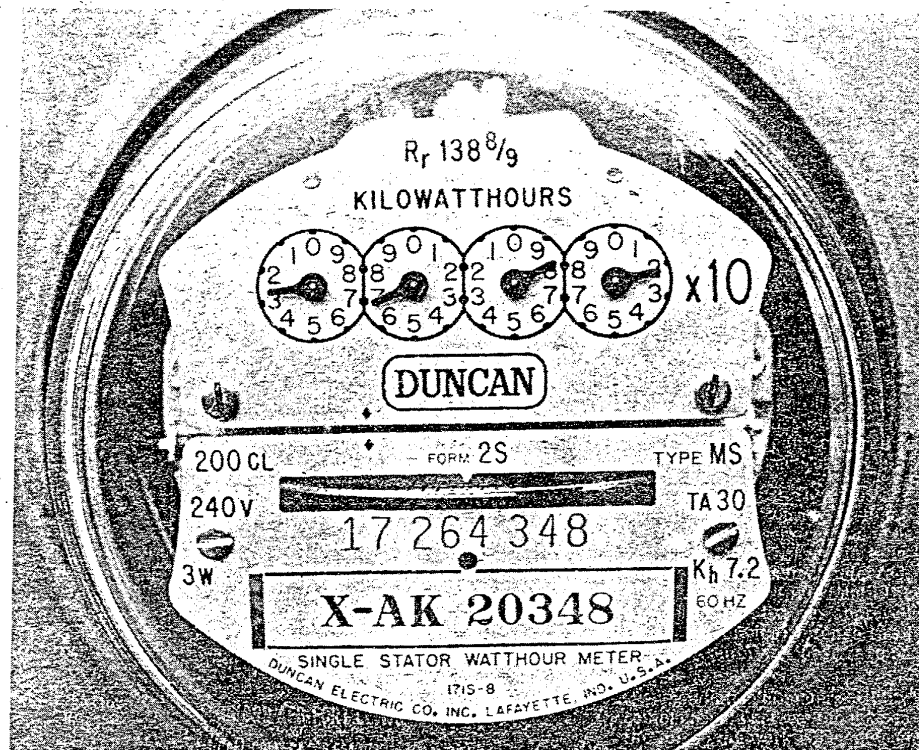
WASHINGTON — The experimental program to measure energy use by military family housing occupants is behind schedule.

It had been planned to start the test program about January 1. Instead, it now appears the utility metering and delivery of mock bills to families at the test locations may begin about July 1.

Moreover, some officials believe, the program, which was dictated by Congress at a cost of \$5 million, may not get under way until Oct. 1, 1978. A report on the results must be given to Congress by Jan. 1, 1980.

No single problem has caused the delay, Pentagon officials said, but time has been required to work on these aspects of the test:

- Housing sites: Locations had to be picked in a variety of climate areas and all services had to be presented. Military installations were nominated, selected, topped and substituted until the present "final" list was approved by an all-service Defense task force. Three Army posts are on the list.
- Installation of meters: Utility companies did not want to take on the job so the work is being done by the government or private contractors. Some services are far ahead of others in getting the meters installed, but it is undecided whether the meter reading and mock billing should begin early in the units that have the



meters or wait until all units have them.

- Energy use standards: To pinpoint "excessive" use of energy, standards of normal use must

be worked out, taking into account the type of housing construction and local weather patterns. Defense is working out norms for use of electricity for lights, television and other household uses. The

Army is working on heating and cooling norms of fuel consumption.

When the system begins operation, families in metered housing

will receive monthly mock bills that will show the amount of energy use that would be considered normal, the amount used, difference from the norm and, if over the norm, the cost to the government of the excessive use.

The test was ordered by Congress to check allegations that military families, because they are not charged for utilities in government housing, waste energy. Results of the test will help Defense and Congress decide whether meters should be installed in all Defense family housing.

Meters for electricity, gas, fuel oil and other fuels are being installed in 11,607 family housing units at 10 military installations:

- Cold weather area: Navy's Public Works Center, Great Lakes, Ill., 2089 units.
- Hot and humid area: Fort Gordon, Ga., 883 units; Marine Corps AS, Beaufort, N.C., 1276 units; Little Rock AFB, Ark., 1535 units.
- Hot and dry area: Cannon AFB, N.M., 1012 units; Yuma PG, Ariz., 290 units.
- Moderate climate, with air conditioning: Marine Corps Development and Education Command, Quantico, Va., 1820 units; Fort Eustis, Va., 1325 units.
- Moderate climate, without air conditioning: Navy's Point Mugu, Calif., 883 units and Naval Construction Battalion Center, Port Hueneme, Calif., 500 units.